

Impact of Leadership development program on Organizational Performance: Mediating the role of employee performance

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ABSTRACT

Objective:

The on hand study is an attempt to check the “impact of leadership development programs on firm performance mediating the role of employee performance “on telecom and banking firms of Pakistan through a well designed survey.

Methodology:

Regression analysis was used to check the impact of leadership development program on employee performance and to check the mediating role of employee performance on firm performance Baron & Kenny (1986) regression method was used. The population of the study is the employees of telecom and banking sector which have been undergone in leadership development program inside the organization. The survey is conducted through a well designed questionnaire taking the sample size of 150 employees through random sampling method. Both primary and secondary data is used in this survey. Prime data is analyzed through SPSS and secondary data is used for literature and study framework. Mean and standard deviation is taken and the results are explored through regression analysis.

Originality of the work:

In Pakistan, first time employee performance is taken as moderator to check the impact of leadership development programs on firm performance in case of banking and telecom sector. Form methodological point of view first time Baron & Kenny approach is used on such type of model. The previous gap in literature is covered by providing theoretical support. In literature equity theory was used in case of organizational justice but in this study its dimensions are used to provide theoretical support.

Findings:

The findings of the study reveal that there is significant relationship between components of employee development program and employee performance. The result also indicates the employee performance significantly influence firm performance.

Conclusion:

The resolved remarks of the author’s states that coaching, T & D, empowerment and participation have significant impact on employee performance and firm performance can be enhanced if employee’s performance is

enhanced through leadership development programs.

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Today firms are crying out for leaders who devote in their development and accomplish the firms shared Vision. In this competitive business environment firms can win in the market if the change is build on the human side because people and process are more important than goals and organizational structure. Firms which have highly motivated and trained human capital can provide assurance for success in achieving its goals but leaders on the other side motivates the followers by investing in them and empowering them to do the best for organizational performance (Shekari and Nikooparvar 2012). Firm victory is not due to one or two individual's performance but it requires a collative effort from all the people working in the organization. Good performance is the desire of any organization as it links with strategic objectives and action (Pyon, Lee et al. 2009). HR professionals consider employee performance more important as it is the building block for firm performance and the factors at the back must be analyzed (Abbas and Yaqoob 2009). But from strategic point of view the basic question arises that how can employee work

more effectively and efficiently so that organization produces a road for growth and higher productivity. For that expectations from the managers are higher because they supervised individuals. But the problem is that we see managers are running towards their bosses for guidelines to do the work better. That's why it is important for firms to develop managers that can fulfill their responsibilities innovatively, having knowledge of business and see the situations critically and influence the followers. Developing leaders through a well established agenda within the organization can provide advantage to the firm as leadership has direct or indirect influence on organizational performance (Vigoda-Gadot 2007). Leadership development agenda is the basic need of an organization for high performance as it provides top level mangers assistance to build leadership qualities inside the organization (Abbas and Yaqoob 2009). In current business setting, leadership development agenda is strategically imperative (Leskiw and Singh 2007). Leadership development agenda improves individuals skills at all level whether it's operational, strategical or personnel. Individual and organizational performance is a vital feature for the success of any

organization and leadership development programs inside the organization is a way forward to improve performance (Yukl 2002). In the past leadership was considered as a major topic of research but over the past two decades researchers made recommendable efforts to explore the relationship of leadership with other organizational factors (Duckett and Macfarlane 2003) and it becomes the base of our study.

The on the whole objective of this study is to check the impact of leadership development programs on the firm performance by checking the mediating role of employee performance. The study is undertaken on Pakistani firms which have leadership development programs inside the organization. That's why this study is an attempt to highlight the importance of leadership development programs, its impact on employee performance and how it affects the firm performance.

Keywords:

Leadership, Employee performance, Firm performance, Coaching, Training and development, Participation, Empowerment.

Rationale of the study:

This study is an attempt to provide value in use by providing input to the management about leadership development program which will in assortment and design of the leadership development agenda inside the organization. This study will provide deep insight about the leadership developmental activities and its impact on performance of both at individual and organizational level. The study will provide guidelines to management in investing in human capital and challenges regarding leadership development agenda.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW:

In the growth of any organization human capital plays a vital role because it improves performance as well as productivity. Leadership is an art of influencing subordinates so that they can work eagerly and voluntarily within the frame work of certain goals and objectives (Mehrabi, Roozbehani et al.). Employee performance can be improved if the leader is capable of mobilizing human capital through human relations. In current environment firms can not be able to improve their service quality without good management, knowledge and advancement of technology with suitable leadership (Mehrabi, Roozbehani et al.).

Leadership proceed as a driving force to enhance motivation, humanizing employee abilities, knowledge and civilizing organizational forces and compiling programs and purposes so that firm can accomplish desired objectives (Hasibi, Dejvakh et al.). In the past leadership was considered as a major topic of research but over the past two decades researchers made recommendable efforts to explore the relationship of leadership with other organizational factors (Duckett and Macfarlane 2003) and it becomes the base of our study

2.1 Leadership development:

Leadership is the aptitude of individuals to influence or encourage others so that they can work eagerly to obtain certain organizational objectives (Davis, 2010). (Jandaghi, Hosseini Fard et al. 2011) **define leadership as,” a procedure in which executive of the organization facilitates the work assignments of subordinates in such a way that motivation of employees increases through effective relations and they work more eagerly and enthusiastically towards firms goals.** Leadership is all about enhancing abilities of others and developing perspectives for others to boost motivation and directing individuals towards firm’s goals

(Mehrabi, Roozbehani et al.). Leadership development agenda includes many components such as coaching, participation, education, authorization and empowerment in job related assignments. In the last few decades leadership developments got popularity and refer as escalating executive’s expansion methods and enhancing coordination among employees and management on work environment (Mehrabi, Roozbehani et al.). Literary authors consider the concept of leadership differently and believe it goes beyond the management practices and focus on individual competencies and problems of coordination in work related life (Anderson, Cylent et al. 2009). Many authors use the term employee development and leadership development interchangeably. According to (Antonacopoulou and Gabriel 2001), the development of employee through organizational program is a building block as it reflects that firm cares for employees and wants them to develop.

2.2 Employee performance:

Employee performance refers as, perceived employee efficiency and productivity consequently through employee development and employee performance will eventually

affect the feat of firm (Hameed and Waheed 2011). According to (Antonacopoulou and Gabriel 2001), when employees are willing to develop through organizational programs their performance will improve. The performance of employees will improve through leadership development programs inside the organization but it is the responsibility of employees to participate in developmental activities more willingly. To enhance performance of employees it is compulsory that all level employees must participate in developmental activities, whether they are lower level, upper level or middle level employees (Antonacopoulou 2000). High morale of employees enhances employee performance (Shafie, Baghersalimi et al.) and leadership development programs boost up the morale of the employees. (Shafie, Baghersalimi et al.) states that, the survival of any organization is based on the effectiveness of employee performance. That's why management of any firm must pay attention to enhance performance of their employees and leadership development act as strong mechanism to lead the firm in the market.

2.3 Firm performance:

In the field of human resource firm performance was considered as a

multidimensional concept. According to (Singh 2003), there are three measures of firm performance (1) price-cost margin (2) return on assets (3) and growth in market share. (Combs, Liu et al. 2006) suggests a multidimensional concept to measure firm performance as, Operational performance and financial performance. The elements of Perceived operational performance include; operating cost, quality of the product, employee retention, speed of delivery and employee productivity. The elements of firm operational performance include; return on investment, net profit and growth rate in sales. The study of (Hameed and Waheed 2011) suggests that employee development leads to employee performance and employee performance has significant impact on firm performance. (Singh 2004) state that organizational performance means striving for overall organizational goals and objectives. Performance is crucial concept as it links with organizational strategic goals and objectives (Mwita 2003).

2.4 THEORETICAL BACK GROUND:

Equity theory:

Equity theory has two chief structural mechanisms as Inputs and outcomes or consequences. Inputs are described as, individual's contribution towards exchange relationship for which he or she expects a return (Adams, 1965). Out comes or

consequences are describes as the rewards which individuals perceives to be get in return of exchange relationship. Out comes includes factors such as pay, salary, reward, remuneration and may include factors such as intrinsic motivation (Blakely, Andrews et al. 2005). According to (Adams, 1965) individual social behavior is affected by allocation of returns and believes and it is suggested that consequences should hold same proportional as inputs. It means when comparison is made the output of one person should be equal to the other person in the same ratio if the inputs are same. (Folger and Cropanzano 2001) states that perceived inequity between individuals can lead to unpleasant behavior and ultimately affects performance. The existence of inequity motivates people to reduce inequity and the strength to reduce inequity should be equal to the intensity of the inequity perception. In other words, Adams equity theory will focus on the consequences and reactions of the inequity.

Many literary authors use equity theory and its structural components in their studies. But previous studies only use equity theory and its components on individuals' behaviors. No study was founded in which equity theory was used on firm's level. But in this study this gap is overcome by using equity theory on organizational level. Both inputs and outcomes which are the structural components of the equity theory (Lee 2000) were used in our study to check the impact of leadership development program on firm performance. Organizations provide inputs to

individuals in the form of leadership development programs and expects from their employees to show desired behaviors. Inputs are in the form of leadership development agenda within the organization such as, coaching, training & development, participation and empowerment. Firms expect outcomes in the form of improved employee and firm performance. Equity theory also suggests that inequity can be overcome through perceived fairness (Lee 2000). If organizational performance is improved through leadership development program and employee shows certain behavior than it can set a new paradigm to equity theory.

Transformational Leadership:

Transformational leadership represents a latest archetype in leadership theories and practices. It can be defined as, a superior form of leadership that occurs when leaders broaden and evaluates the interest of their followers towards team goals rather than self interest (Bass & Avolio, 1993). According to this definition of leadership, when an organizational leader motivates their individuals to look beyond their interest towards team than they definitely enhance performance. The study of (Barling and Helleur, 2000) support the view of Bass and suggest four dimensions of transformational leadership. The relevance of these dimensions with our study is further defined in table no.1.

Table no. 1

| Idealized Influence | Intellectual stimulation |
|---|--|
| This behavior occurs when leaders enhance the trust & admiration of individuals by doing right things instead of they think followers do the things right. They hand out as role model and do the things right and the results are in the form of improved performance. | This behavior of leadership involves when leaders engaging the rationality of followers and focus on individuals to challenge the previous assumptions in new way. Leaders help followers to answer their own questions. It means they help individuals to solve their problems and the resulted effects are in the shape of changed behavior. |
| Inspirational Motivation | Individualized consideration |
| In this behavior, leaders give individuals a deep inspiration and motivation. They help subordinates to achieve high level of performance which is beyond the expectations of the followers. | In this behavior, leaders engage followers by treating them on individual level. They recognize the needs of individuals appreciate their work and celebrate the success. |

The view of (Kirkbride, 2006) about transformational leadership strongly supports our study. Kirkbride define transformational leadership as, this behavior of leadership involve the stipulation of a persuasion and committing on a clear vision and enhancement of employee's commitment towards organizational change rather than personal identification. When leaders inside the organization inspire others and motivate followers than performance of employees will improve and firm is able to achieve its desired goals and objectives.

Organizational Leadership program (OLP):

The vision of any organization can only become reality when leaders in the organization done a superior role and facilitating followers as first line supervisors. Our study had roots back to the end of 2000 when OLP was first established in the field of technologies. The first official project of OLP was introduced in September 2000 and the purpose was to deliver the procedures and processes by all the departments in most effective way. The core purpose of this OLP

project was to develop skills and preparing first line supervisor to meet the future needs of the targeted organization. The training was started in 2003 as a short learning course and further the Tshwane University of technology included five subjects to this program relating to leadership (Ref). After that this program was widely accepted by many organizations to develop competencies in their employees to meet the needs of the organizations. In early days, firms send their individuals in institutions for developing leaders and individuals get the National Organizational Leadership Certificate. But now-a-days, firms adopt this program inside the organization

and now they hold leadership development programs where employee skills are enhance through different mechanisms.

3.0 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK:

The conceptual framework of the study is adopted from the study of (Hameed and Waheed 2011). Leadership development is used as independent variable while organizational performance is used as dependent variable while employee performance is taken as mediating variable (see below fig).

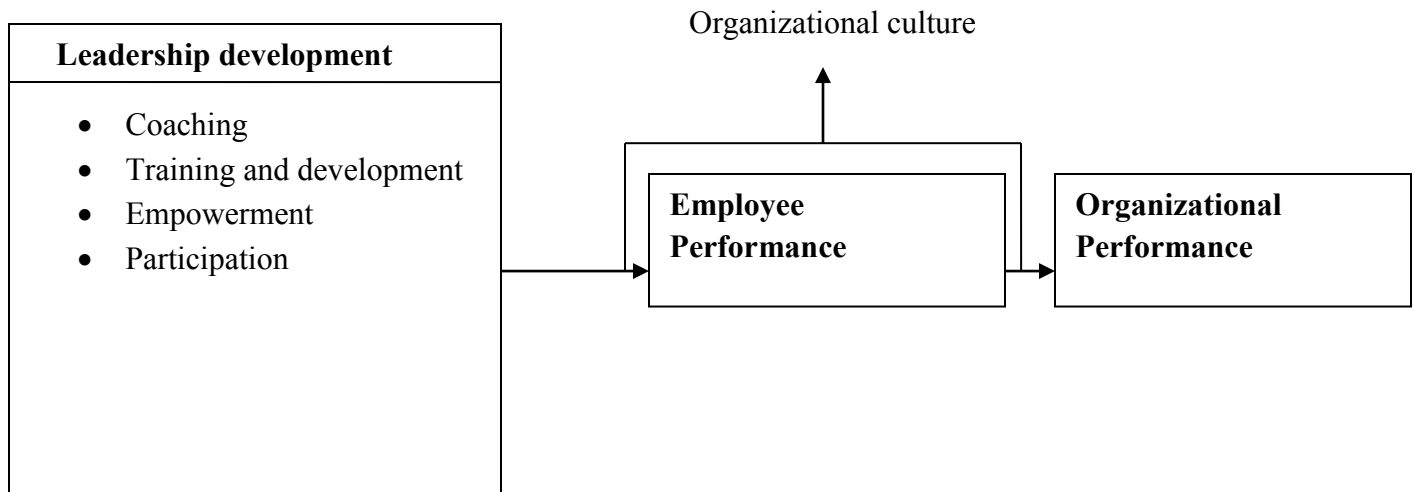


Fig: Research Framework

The study of (Hameed and Waheed 2011), use different variables to explore the leadership development. While in this study we use, coaching, T & D, empowerment and participation as the antecedents of leadership

development. These antecedents were adopted from the study of (Abbas and Yaqoob 2009). (Hameed and Waheed 2011) check the impact of leadership development program on firm performance but in our study

we use employee performance as mediating variable. To check the impact of leadership development organizational culture is considered as a big challenge. For this study, organizational culture was supposed to be supportive and taken as moderator.

Operationalization of leadership development program:

3.1 Coaching:

Coaching is a central activity in leadership development and it is not formal which include treating employees as partner in achieving organizational as well as personal goals (Hameed and Waheed 2011). Coaching has significant impact on employee performance as it is a strong tool in solving employee problems (Agarwal, Angst et al. 2009). Coaching is used on job environment to identify problems faced by employees and help employees to solve these problems (Abbas and Yaqoob 2009). Coaching is considered as a technique to improve employee performance (Champathes 2006). Coaching is not a one way activity it is a two way communication where executives find out where problems are arises and how to solve them (Abbas and Yaqoob 2009). (Du Toit 2007) states that coaching deal with beliefs and behaviors that obstruct

performance. It is also explore that coaching is all about helping individuals to improve their performance (Starr 2004).

3.2 Training & development:

Training is an activity which brings enduring change in behavior and trains employees how to do a particular job on the other hand development is a long process (Leibowitz and Schlossberg 1981). Organizations must develop training programs carefully as it relates to performance (Armstrong and Baron 2000). T & D programs enhance employee performance so these programs must be designed according to the needs of the employees (Khan, Khan et al. 2011). The organizations which link their T & D programs with the needs of the employees have better results in the market (Avolio, Avey et al. 2010). The study results of (Khan, Khan et al. 2011) explores that a well designed T & D programs enhance individual and organizational performance while a bad T & D program is nothing but a wastage of resources. T & D programs are designed to improve the skills of employees either through formal training or on the job training (Abbas and Yaqoob 2009). To fill the gap of actual and desired performance the management of the firms must design training

and development programs effectively (Sahinidis and Bouris 2008).

3.3 Empowerment:

Empowerment is an activity in which employee capacity is enlarged and also gives freedom to employees to do their job effectively (Hameed and Waheed 2011). The study results of (Duvall 1999) explores that empowerment can bring success which means achievement and accomplishment of task. The consequences of success all the way through empowerment are (1) success in the form of employee role performance which means individual success (2) firm success which is achieved as employees of the firm strive towards collective goals and objectives (3) and since employees split their experiences which are jointly valuable and leads to the fulfillment of individuals and organizational level goals. It means empowerment is a strong tool to enhance employee and firm performance.

3.4 Participation:

Participation is a process in which individuals are allowed to take part in decision making process in setting goals and objectives and that leads to improvement in employee performance by taking smart decision by the employees (Hameed and Waheed 2011). The study conducted by (Chen, Tjosvold et al.

2006) on the employees of china and America relating to participation management states that participation of employees can enhance performance. Further results of this study explores that, employees which are allowed to take part in decision making process have a significant impact on organizational success as they can share their problems freely and that leads to high commitment from employees and lower turnover rate. Therefore, through the support of literature we can draw a hypothesis as,

3.5 Organizational culture:

Employees are the key success factor of any firm. Firm failure or success is heavily depended upon employee's performance. Therefore, firms are trying to develop their key personnel's through leadership development programs. But organizational culture acts as a big challenge in this context. Leadership development programs are dependent upon environmental factors such as organizational culture. If organizational culture supports employees, it will encourage employee to participate in decision making process and helps employees to achieve certain goals and objectives (Hameed and Waheed 2011). The study results of (Antonacopoulou and Gabriel 2001) reported

that organizational culture plays a vital role in leadership development and other factors such as commitment of top level management and opportunities of promotion to employees also influence employee developmental programs and employee performance. Therefore, in this study organizational culture is taken as moderator to check whether it strengthens the relationship between antecedents of leadership development agenda and employee performance. If it strengthens the relationship then this will become our contribution to existing literature.

4.0 HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION:

The main purpose of this study is to check the impact of leadership development programs on the performance of employees. In leadership development program, respondents are examined by taking coaching, training and development, empowerment and participation. Based on the above literature we can draw our hypothesis as;

H1: Employee performance mediates the relationship between leadership developmental activities and firm performance.

H2: Coaching positively influence employee performance.

H3: T & D has positive impact on employee performance.

H4: Empowerment positively influences employee performance.

H5: There is a significant relationship between participation and employee performance.

5.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Methodology can be distinct as, a logical array wherein researcher plan is executed while the relation that links methodology with essence of the research is called research design (Haider). Methodology holds coherent formation otherwise it is an undemanding direction. Overall, research methodology works as guideline and helps researchers to draw results. The adoptive methodology of this study includes research design, sampling techniques, population and analysis of prime data through SPSS.

5.1 Research design:

The main purpose of this study is to check the impact of leadership development program on firm performance mediating the role of employee performance. This study is conducted through a survey with the help of a well designed questionnaire that's why it is

quantitative in nature. The prime data which is composed through questionnaire is experienced to check the legitimacy. The analysis of collected data is done through SPSS and the results are shown in the shape of figures and graphs.

5.2 Population:

The widespread universe from which data is composed is called population (Haider)(b) & Reinard, 1994). Population can also be defined as, an assortment of cases from which sample is drawn to portray it in study framework is known as population (Haider). For our study, the population is both the female and male employees of banking and telecom firms from Pakistan. For our study, the unit of analysis consists of employees which undergone in leadership development programs inside the organization.

5.3 Sampling methodology:

The reliability of results is the key objective of every researcher thus it is the basic need of the researcher to cover whole population. But the reality is different, due to time and financial barriers it is not possible to cover the whole universe. That's why; a sample is drawn from the population that reflects same traits as of population. Sampling act as an

accommodating tool for researcher that's helps in pretesting of items (Haider). The sample is taken from the cities of Lahore and Sargodha by convenient sampling technique and the basic requirements of the sample is that a particular employee must have leadership development experience. To overcome the issues of gender, both male and female employees are selected equally.

6.0 ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION:

The analysis of data is done by using SPSS (20) to check the impact of antecedents of cell phone advertisement on behavioral intentions of consumers.

6.1 Statistical tests:

The chi square test is performed to investigate that whether there is a difference exists between expected values and observed values from the respondent's scores or not. The results of chi-square test explore that there is significant difference exists among observed and expected values as frequencies are according to set standards (see table no.2).

Table no. 2: Chi-Square Test (leadership development, employee performance, firm performance)

| | Leadership development activities | Employee performance | Firm performance |
|-------------|---|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Chi-Square | 152.177 ^a | 77.043 ^a | 127.087 ^a |
| Df | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Asymp. Sig. | .000 | .000 | .000 |

The on the whole objectives of this study is to check whether employee performance mediates the relationship or not between leadership developmental activities and firm performance. To check the assumptions of serial correlation among the residuals Durbin-Watson rule is used. Durbin-Watson thumb rule claims the values ranges from 0-4. The basic idea behind that rule is that the values

close to 0 shows there is no serial correlation among the residuals. And the values close to 4 shows there is strong residual of one case is related to other case and serial correlation exists. Table no.3 suggests Durbin-Watson value (1.61) which is close to standard value 0. It means there is no assumption of serial correlation among the residual of one case with the other in the data (see table no.3).

Table no. 3 Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin-Watson |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | .282 ^a | .078 | .064 | .75751 | 1.161 |

6.2 Regression analysis:

In our study we use regression test to check whether leadership developmental activities have significant impact with firm performance or not. The hypothesis (H2) is accepted as, Coaching has positive

relationship with firm performance because the regression value is (.000) and it defeats the standard value (.05). This was also proved by (Du Toit 2007). The study hypothesis (H3) is accepted as the significant value is (.000) which is less than required value of (.05). It means training & development has significant

impact on firm performance and it is also proved by (Avolio, Avey et al. 2010). The hypothesis (H4), empowerment positively influences employee performance is accepted as the significant value is (.001) which is less than the mandatory value (.05). There is a

significant relationship between participation and employee performance (H5) is also accepted as the significant value is (.002) and it defeats the standard value (.05). This was also proved by (Chen, Tjosvold et al. 2006). (see table no.4)

Table no. 4: Coefficients^a

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | T | Sig. |
| (Constant) | .324 | .077 | .325 | 4.430 | .000 |
| Coaching | .375 | .081 | .264 | 4.621 | .000 |
| Training & development | .371 | .067 | .322 | 4.421 | .000 |
| Empowerment | .886 | .074 | .321 | 3.878 | .001 |
| Participation | .326 | .070 | .234 | 3.873 | .002 |

a. Dependent Variable: Firm performance

6.3 Mediation results (Baron & Kenny approach):

- a. In our study the mediation effect is checked by using Baron & Kenny approach. In (1986), Baron & Kenny suggest that one should check mediation effect by using three steps; First, Draw a regression model of mediator variable on the independent variable of the study. Second, draw the regression model of independent variable on the dependent variable of the study. Third, and draw the regression of dependent variable on both the independent variable and mediator of the study.

Table no.5: Regression test to check the effect of mediation

| Sr. no | Dependent variable | Independent variable | Parameter estimate | T-value | R2 | Model F |
|--------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------|------|----------|
| 1 | Employee performance | Leadership development activities | 1.34 | **13.77 | 0.65 | **215.41 |
| 2 | Firm performance | Leadership development activities | 0.22 | *2.80 | 0.34 | *22.45 |
| 3 | Firm performance | Leadership development activities | 0.27 | **2.04 | | |
| | | Employee performance | 0.29 | *2.01 | 0.39 | ***29.78 |

N= 150, $p < 0.05$ (1), $p < 0.01$ (2), $p < 0.002$ (3)

Consistent with above table no.5, the required circumstances of Baron & Kenny approach is satisfied as (1) $p < 0.05$ (2) $p < 0.01$ (3) $p < 0.002$. The results of this regression approach explore that employee performance mediates the relationship among leadership development activities and firm performance. This means our study hypothesis (H1) is accepted as it fulfills all the conditions of Baron & Kenny approach.

Conclusion:

The overall objective of this study is to check the impact of leadership development programs on firm performance taking mediating role of employee performance. From all the data and material the results of the study are quite significant. The resolved remarks of the author's reveals that there is a significant relationship between leadership development programs and firm performance as the entire hypothesis are accepted.

Limitations of the study & future research:

A remarkable effort has been made to check the impact of leadership development programs on firm performance mediating role of employee performance. In this study previous gap in literature is covered but still some limitation exists. First, the sample size is small and only banking and telecom sector is under consideration other sectors are ignored due to time and barriers.

By using Baron & Kenny approach the mediation results are checked and find that employee performance significantly mediates the relationship among leadership development activities and firm performance. In Pakistan first time employee performance is taken as mediator in case of banking and telecom sectors. This study is quite useful for managers regarding their development of human capitals as we all know that human capital is a key to success. But the development of human capital can take firms towards their goals and objectives as results of the study suggests. Managers must take this study into their strategic actions to achieve firm's goals and objectives effectively.

Limitations & future research:

A remarkable effort is made to check the impact of leadership development programs on firm performance taking mediating role of employee performance. Still limitations exists as this is totally new study in Pakistan in which employee performance is taken as mediator. First, sample size is quite small and only telecom and banking sector is taken as unit of analysis other sectors is ignored. Second, organizational culture is taken as moderator but in this study we assume it as

supportive culture because literature does not provide support to take organizational culture as moderator. Only few leadership developmental activities are taken in this study but in future studies a bundle of HR practices must be taken to make study more impressive. In future organizational culture must be taken as moderator and sample size must be increased.

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